

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9878

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

AMCONSUL LYON

AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

AMCONSUL MARTINIQUE

AMCONSUL NICE

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: JOBERT PRESS CONFERENCE: IS ANYBODY LISTENING?

1. ANNOUNCING HIS DESIRE TO "LOOSEN UP FRENCH POLITICAL LIFE," FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER JOBERT, AT A PARIS PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 11, STATED HIS READINESS TO RUN FOR LEGISLATIVE OFFICE IF IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT A MAJORITY OF ELECTORS WOULD CAST THEIR VOTES FOR HIM. STRESSING THAT HE IS IN CONTACT WITH MEMBERS OF THE UDR AND OTHER PARTIES AS WELL, JOBERT PROMISED TO WATCH CLOSELY PUBLIC REACTION TO HIS ANNOUNCEMENT FOR AN INDICATION THAT IT REFLECTED A REAL NEED. IN THAT CASE, HE SAID, HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO FORM AN ORGANIZING COMMITTEE "ON THE CENTER LEFT", BUT WOULD NOT NECESSARILY TAKE THE CENTER OF THE STAGE. JOBERT ATTRIBUTED HIS DECISION TO THREE POLITICAL IMPERATIVES: RESPECT FOR INSTITUTIONS, A PROGRAM OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND A WELL-LED FOREIGN

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POLICY.

2. IN COMMENTING ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, JOBERT OBSERVED WITH DISAPPROVAL THAT GERMAN CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT, IN HIS "NEWSWEEK" INTERVIEW, HAD SHOWN HIS READINESS TO ACCEPT ACROSS-THE-BOARD US LEADERSHIP, PROVIDED ONLY THAT IT NOT BE TOO VISIBLE. HE ALSO EXPRESSED THE FEAR THAT IF FRANCE DOES NOT LOOK OUT FOR ITS OWN INTERESTS, IT WILL SOON BECOME A "FOUNDLING NATION."

3. DECLARING THAT "THE UNION OF THE LEFT EXISTS" AND THAT THOSE WHO VOTED FOR THE LEFT IN THE LAST ELECTION CERTAINLY HAD "GOOD REASONS" FOR DOING SO, JOBERT CONCLUDED THAT ONLY A CHANGE IN MENTALITY (WHICH HE IMPLICITLY STANDS READY TO CULTIVATE) WOULD BRING THE SOCIALISTS BACK TOWARD THE CENTER.

4. PARIS PRESS REACTION TO JOBERT'S ANNOUNCEMENT HAS BEEN BEMUSED. IN AN ARTICLE TITLED "JOBERT OR THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER," LE QUOTIDIEN DE PARIS TERMS HIS ADVENTURE "LESS A PLAN THAN A DREAM." COMMENTATORS GENERALLY QUESTION THE VIABILITY OF THE MOVEMENT HE PROPOSES TO CREATE, WHILE ADMIRING HIS SINCERITY. COMMUNIST L'HUMANITE NOTES FAVORABLY HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE UNION OF THE LEFT, WHILE L'AUREORE ASKS RHETORICALLY WHETHER "JOBERTISM" HAS BEEN BORN. JUNE 12 INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, CITING STATEMENTS JOBERT MADE SHORTLY AFTER LEAVING OFFICE, DEPICTS JOBERT'S GOAL AS A "MOVEMENT TO DAMPEN US LEADERSHIP", A THEME MORE IMPLICIT THAN EXPLICIT IN JOBERT'S JUNE 11 DECLARATION.

5. COMMENT. JOBERT SEEMS TO BE SAYING THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO ENTER POLITICS, BUT ISN'T QUITE SURE HOW TO GO ABOUT IT. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER HE CAN CREATE A POLITICAL FUTURE FROM HIS DIPLOMATIC PAST.

6. POUCHING TRANSCRIPT TO EUR/WE.
IRWIN

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